

# APOLOGY

FOR  
CHRISTOPHER SYMS

Cent. and his way and Method of teaching, the effect thereof, and his end therein, against many foule and <sup>univ.</sup> false Aspersions <sup>LIB.</sup> <sup>CAMB.</sup>

*Wherein and whereby is averred and maintained that all persons, who can see, hear and speak, may bee easily taught to read.*

And that all Children, which can read, may be easily taught to understand the Latine Speech.

*Vide, Fide.*



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An Apology, for *Christopher Syme* <sup>10</sup>  
 Gent. and his way and method of teaching, the effects thereof, and his  
*end therein, &c.*

**S***Cundisur incertum studia in contraria vulgus:*  
 So it was in the Poets time, so is now, and so it will be, when I am gone, and sleepe with my Fathers. Yet while I am broad waking in this lyncean eye sighted age, wherein every man is apt to bee peeping and spying, above, beneath, and round about another, especially a stranger, (such persons for the most part being the busiest, who have the narrowest eyes both in apprehension and judgement) the peircing glaunces of some shallow, rash, preiudicate, uncertaine and slanderous censures, darted at me, and my practise in teaching, either from ignorant, or malevolent aspects, or both, enforce from me a reflection, and constraine me to say somewhat more certainly for both against them: wherein if I should endeavour to avoide the various passions, and ungrounded censures of such persons, who are not endued with ability to iudge of the dispositions of mindes, or the qualities and ends of workes and actions; I might as justly draw on my selfe the censure of weakenes, folly, and madnes, as mine honest artificiall endeavours have undeservedly and unjustly pulled upon me the imputation of impostor, cheator conjurer, and crochetter to get money; and that I would get some money in my purse and be gone; that when my slender skill had shewed some reall effect, it would not hold, that the children whom I have taught, can doe nothing, but whilst I am present, and such other fantastick censures, I know not what. These giddy indiscreet cen-

fures doubles have proceeded from persons ignorant of  
 any cause; who like young & ill sented hounds not know-  
 ing their game run on in the chace, and spend their mouths  
 for company. Let them bark: *Quibusdam canibus sic innat-  
 natum est latrare, ut non pro feritate; sed pro consuetudine la-  
 tentis* as their good words cannot much benefit; so their  
 evill words will doe little hurt. For, *Quicquid faciunt, ex  
 morbo faciunt, non ex iudicio*, they extoll and praise (for the  
 most part) the unworthy, and cry downe and condemne  
 the deserving and innocent; *faciunt quod solent, non quod  
 mereor, male de me loquuntur homines; sed mali & maliarii*  
 they will be meddling. But my drift and scope is, not to  
 give satisfaction to such: it were a vaine, endles, and would  
 be a fruitlesse labour. *Rumor vulgi attonitus*; I leave them  
 to their owne folly and madnes, and I am content to passe  
 by, and slyde away as a strange dog doth thorow a towne  
 or streete, when every domestick curre hath a snap at him.  
 Such like is humane curtesie, and more envious, inhumane,  
 and barbarous are the English to their owne countrymen;  
 then other nations: I am not glad, that I can speake it. *Mo-  
 verer aulem si Marcus Cato; si Lelius sapiens, si alter Cato, si  
 duo Scipiones ista loquerentur de me.* Those Lely, those Sci-  
 pizes, those Curij, those Catoes, who attribute nothing to the  
 vulgar idoles, opinion and fame, envy and detraction;  
 which for the most part carries all now; who never enter-  
 taine a preiudicate opinion, either of persons, or of things;  
 who never vent a rash censure without mature delibera-  
 tion upon events and issues of workes, are the men whose  
 good esteeme and good report I affect and seeke; and that  
 not for mine owne sake meereley, but for the workes sake  
 cheifly, which I have in hand: the prooffe whereof will  
 maintaine it selfe; to be worth respect and embracement  
 of a commonwealth; which shall with Gods helpe, if mine  
 industry be accepted, benefit the world, when I am gone; if  
 the envious, *quasi canis in praesepi*, hinder not: to prevent  
 whose malice and opposition, it is very necessary by this  
 way of Apology, to stop the wide mouthes of ignorant  
 and

and envious detractors, besides whom none will disallow the fitness, and in some cases the necessity of apologies and defences, as in this subject of this mine apology, whereby I doubt not, but in some measure to make it evidently appear, that my method and experiment of teaching is of greater and better consequence, then to be slighted, despised, or rejected: And I hope no teacher, no scholler, no man disparaged thereby, although it proceede from a mean and obscure author, who never sought employment by a *si quis*, nor glory out of other mens disgraces. If the method were a trick or toy, that could not be conveyed to others, but must vanish with my selfe, I would easily yeeld, it were of no value: but it is otherwise, it may be continued to all posterity. It is as well the instruction of children in the Latine language, as also in reading the English with more alacrity, celerity, and facility, then formerly; the example whereof may be followed in other languages. I am verily perswaded that few teachers have hitherto otherwise delighted in that function, then as carriers, saylers, bargemen, and the like doe in their painfull, hard, stormy and perillous journeyes and voyages, which they undergoe meereley for the sustentation of life. For mine owne part, since I found the validity of the method, I never tooke delight in any earthly thing, but in teaching; and should delight much more, if I might be recompenced. As for profit, I suppose, that every man, who knoweth nothing of my education, inclination, or meane qualification, can and will say for me, that other more advantageous courses of life might have beene undertaken, if advancement or gaine had beene the object of mine undertaking. And those, who doe truly know me (I doubt not) will soone deliver their opinion, it being required, that I am *sanctus, quam causa mediocriter adaptatus*, and that I make not the profession my *ultimum refugium* as being necessitous, and fit for nothing else, nor yet for that. Although it cannot be denied, but that many unexpert men doe so without controulment, in divers places, both in England and

*Ireland*, whom the meane sort of people, and some who will not be so ranked, because they accept slender and base hyre, employ and applaud, and let their children spin out time with them, untill they have gotten even as much skill as their teachers. Such a one could I point out in this citties suburbs, who understandeth not the difference betweene *e* and *diphthong*; as I can make appeare under his owne hand writing. It is an ordinary practise in *England*, for men who have themselves no faculty in teaching, (to the end they may raise unto themselves a livelyhood,) to take into their houses stipendary mercenaries, teachers of the *Latine*, and *French*, Musicians, Dancers, &c. And one among the rest there is who hath thereby gotten singular fame spread far and neere, who leaving an heroicall (abusively so called) trade, more gainefull, not so lawfull, hath by the encomiastick narration of friends, drawne into his tuition the sonnes of many worthy persons: with what proficiency they have come off, let them boast who found the successe. Of the danger that attends birds, who run too earely from their nests, as the Partridge and the Lapwing, I will say nothing. But little probability is there that any good foundation of the *Latine* can be laide; when the instructors are often changed, as in such a course without doubt they are: for every of them will start for the better stipend, and oftentimes offences on the one side or the other causeth separation. I my selfe knew one man in *England*, who set up the trade, and within two yeares changed the master of his shop seven times, *qui ubiq; est, nusquam est, non venit vulnus ad cicatricem, ubi crebra medicamenta tentantur*. But I digresse: Painefull is the profession, if it be exercised with diligence, as it ought: and yet thereof doth arise little gaine, love, thanks or curtesie, from many unthankfull persons, who, if their children make good progresse and attaine the end, attribute nothing to the teacher, but all to the chilles ingenuity, to time, and the booke, falsely imagining, that there is no Art in teaching, but onely following, as they terme it.

And

And contrarywise if by reason of naturall defects, the teacher cannot infuse so much into their children, as into others more acute, or if their children by reason of naturall deficiency of eyes or tongues be not able, when they are earnestly hastened, to utter what they conceive, nor the parents endued with skill and patience to extract it from their children, then the teacher must be blamed and rebuked, and peradventure goe unrewarded, the parents never considering natures imperfections, and the imbecillity of such capacities, nor the tender care that a wise teacher ought to take of such, least he doe more hurt then good. Many such have I here met with, who besides non-payment, after a good effect of mine Art and industry upon wooden and leaden subjects both young and old, have rewarded me with obloquy, railing, and detraction, and some with violence: yea, where I did best and deserved most, I reaped *Billingsgate* friendship and entertainment, and *Pye-cornes*, and *Picks-batch* farewell. In one place for forty shillings I got a Boxe, but no money to put in a boxe: in another the husband invited me, and the wife gave me a farewell, not *Ussquabush* for *dough a deris*, not a cup, but a pail of hote water on my head, when I was shutting the doore at my departure. *Si quisquam huius procella causam ulterius investigare cupiat, ab archimagito in culina seisciscitur: exinde enim aqua calefacta, in unius lararij oracula petas, quæ nemo, nisi praeceptor ejus, explicare poterit.* To me it seemeth more a riddle, then this *Latine* sentence can be to them, that know not the subject and members thereof, that a dignified Dame should call me cheating knave, and that her Cavallier should smite me, when I had given no offence, nor had gotten any money for a yeare and halfe labour; but was rather cheated of my Art and industry: and that with as much more losse of time, Art, and industry, her Gossip should scold at me, and scold me, no cause of quarrell being knowne or declared, albeit it were demanded. When I consider the parties, I admire not their properties: kind charitable creatures, who would rather, than



I should perish, then they pay me the due reward of my labours. Well yet there is a fourth thing, which might as much discourage me from the prosecution of my profession, as the other three, great paines, small gaires, and base requitall, that is, the slender & mean estimation the world receiveth and holdeth of the professors, when it speaketh according to its weak judgment contemptuously, thus, he is but a Schoolemaster a Pedagogue. If any be unworthy, mens unthankfulness and want of judgment is the cause; for that they make not better choyce, nor will confer better salary upon those, who are more worthy and more able. Surely they ought to be worthy: for upon the it rests, whether the sons of the Nobles and Gentry get, and love learning; for they have the seasoning of them, and a work of weight it is, and must be done in their child-hood, or never, and without all doubt the common wealth is much endamaged, yea, and the Church suffereth, when the Nobles be *agrammari*, and on the contrary both flourish, when they be *philomusi*, and *philologi*. By these precedent reasons it may appeare to the judicious Reader, that I intend it to be my greater glory to defend the work, then the workman. For what have I, who am but a clod of clay, which I have not received from the giver of every good and perfect gift? If then I have received a talent, I have together received a charge, that I shall not hide that talent, and what is it being not communicated? of the employment wherof my conscience informeth me, that a strict account will be exacted at that dreadfull day, when every steward must give a reckoning of his stewardship. If there were no more in it but morality, I would not for virtues sake be *rellus in inutile pondus*. The love of the publick likewise together with mine owne delight may and doth incite me: for other encouragement have I none, neither would I docht but because *non nobis nisi sumus*, and to the end, that the practise thereof might win credit to the experiment for the contemplative demonstration only without the prooffe of practise might worthily be exploded,



ploded. Peradventure some of that rabble, whom I mentioned before, whose derisions I condemn, and whose objections are not worth the answering, will say, what fellow is this? And what great thing is this, that needeth this apology? And why was not this way of teaching (if there be such a thing) found out in former ages, as well as now? And were not children taught to read, and to understand the Latine speech, before this fellow was? True; But many failed even in reading, and in the Latine, there were alwayes as many, or more deficientes then proficientes. Then I say, for the first part of the work, the device and practice being wholly and meerely invented by my selfe, is a way, whereby any person yong or old, acute or obtuse may be taught to read with facility and delight, both to teacher and learner, to which little memory is requisite, but a full pronuntiation is very necessary. By this method a child of perfect speech may be made able to spell english truly and readily whatsoever he proposed, syllable after syllable, the memory being not charged with two at once within one quarter of a yeare; yea it may, it hath beene effected within a moneth, and in lesse time. And doth it not then necessarily follow, that that childe, who can give every letter howsoever transposed, its true sound must easily and speedily read, and that long before he bee fit to learne the Latine tongue, beginning at five yeares of age? Will any sensible man deny it? It is a very plain and easie way and method, not far fetched, nor much strained for, but therein a very little Art added to nature. For the second, it is not meerely mine own, but partly Mr *Lilias*: for hee gave me the hint thereof: Wherein if any man concurre with me in science practick for the common good, I repine not, but rather rejoyce; because the experiment may be more authentick by a twofold or triple cord. Howsoever *cum capitis periculo*, I will maintain it to be such a way and method, whereby the most indocile and obtuse child, whosoever he bee, if *animi compos*, may within one quarter of a yeare after he can read well, be made expert and perfect in the variation

of the Verb, as of all other parts declinable; yea to give English for latine, and Latine for English readily and truly thorowout all Verbs whatsoever, the Verb and his signification being given, and the child being supplied with the preterperfect tense of the Indicative mood, untill he have learned Mr *Lilies* Rules to find out the same; and so consequently, forasmuch as the difficulty and intricacy of the Latine consisteth in the infinitenes of the Verbs variety, which is above one thousand in both voyces, the different signes of the Oprative, Potentiall, and Subjunctive being compared, it will make every child, who is *animi compos*, (as I said before) docile and capable of understanding the Latine, and that within three or foure yeares, and sometimes in much lesse time: As for writing copiously, and speaking fluently, who knoweth not, that much reading must furnish with words and phrase, and frequent speaking bring facility and readines of speech. Both which wayes and methods are such, as when they shall be layd open, every literate man will say, why did not I see this, as well as he? and those men, who now envy, deride and scoffe, and such others, who plot, combine, and load me with detraction, and stir wormanish and worse faction, will alter their opinions, and embrace my poore invention and experiment: which in due time I will tender to reverend authority, teaching in the meane time, none but the lawfull Grammar.

The occasion of my study and exquision to find out a more familiar and easie way of teaching *à primordiis*, then had formerly beene received, was the consideration of the tedious time of seven, eight, nine, yea ten yeares, (may I say, no more) which was and is spent in teaching the Latine speech, and foure, five, and six in the way of roading, with much austerity and bitterness to the great discouragement of children, before it can be brought to perfection; nay yet after much toyle on the teachers part, and torture of the children, many as well the sons of the Nobility and Gentry, as of meaner persons faile, and never attain what they

they goe about, unlesse some more acute then the rest: and many so imperfectly taught to read, that when they come to learn the Latine, both themselves and their teachers thorough their unreadines in reading, unlesse it be first rectified, are much vexed; which produceth no small obstacle to their progresse. And so by that meanes many good wits beaten out of heart, and brought into hatred both of books and learning, yea and teacher too; & not few, when grown up to good stature thorough the sharpenes of some teachers driven into desperate courses. I can truly say that of divers children brought to me, some whereof were eight yeares old, some nine, some ten, some eleven, some twelve, one fourteen, not all the Sons of common persons, nor such as had been neglected, but had been formerly taught with care and cost, none could read so much as meanly well, which my way would have made them do by that time they had accomplished seven years of age, had they begun at five. And moreover some of them, and some yonger so affrighted and discouraged, that untill I had altered their temper with lenity and familiarity, they would quake and shake and sweat, when they came to the businesse. How some of their parents and friends have requited me, who craved not, nor expected my wages, till my work was done, I will not now complain; let me only say, that many withdrew their children from me surreptitiously to save their moneyes, and permitted me not to make appear what was done, lest I should have challenged what was due: And to disgrace me yet further, when I had almost perfected the work for many of them, for the matter of reading; they set up a fly upon the wheele, that presently cryed, what a dust have I stirred? when as the horse heels had stirred the dust, before the fly settled on the coach-wheel. Let them go on with their giddines, avarice, and basenesse, and let their own experience find, that *planta, quae sepius transfertur, non convalescit*; that time will not be called again, that there is Art in teaching, which may and can sharpen and quicken habetude, and help imperfect speech very

much in infancy, before long custome have confirmed it. What effect in the Latine my labours have produced answereable to the efficacie, which I attribute to my Method; if any man require an account, I appeale in the first place to the testimonie of *Master William Langford* Captaine of his Majesties Post Barke, and *Master William Scott* his Majesties Seaacher of his Port of Dublin, who within one moneth after I had undertaken a childe of *Master Scott*, who was my first Scholler but no acute one, (as the issue will manifest now he is off from my method) heard the same child being then halfe a year short of nine yeares of age, give Latine for English, and English for Latine thoroughout a Verb chosen by one of them, and it was *expergitur*. Now because it little availed to tell of such beginnings, unlesse it may appeare, that they were seconded with like proceedings, and because he was taken from me above halfe a year since, at the earnest suit of the mother, *quasi invito patre*, when I had spent two yeares and a quarter upon him, or little more, and for that I am not assured, that that man, to whose instruction hee was next committed, will either give mee or him our dues, and because I am well assured that he will not proceede with the like profit being out of his first Method by reason of his hebetude and yong yeares being but eleven compleate, memorie and judgement being not confirmed, and because much womanish clamour hath bene throated out against mee touching him, those of the faction falsly surmizing him to bee my Master-Peece, and that if hee were taken off; I were utterly supplanted; & *quod saluus superest Artifex*, It is therefore expedient, that I shew to what ripenesse the Childe was growne in our two yeares, which was such, as he was able to read *Tullyes Offices* into English at first sight, and then necessarily able to translate it, and when hee had translated it, to read it againe into true Latine, having never committed any one clause of the booke to memory; he did often in the presence of  

divers

divers persons; the Booke being opened at adventure, read the Latine Testament into English; hee could likewise for short sentences, such like as Corderius hath at an instant, for English give true Latine: for prooffe hereof I could produce the testimony of diverse Gentlemen, not all of the lowest rancke, some whereof tooke a view of the Childes ability accidentally, others at my request; because I foresaw the cloud of future clamor and disgrace, wherewith I was like to bee sprinkled; it was long in rising, all the forraine and domestick windes met in their chappell and consistory to blow it abroad. In the second place, that a child of Mr. *George Badelyes* in Damaske street, did within sixe weekes after hee had entered upon the Introduction to Grammar, being then under the age of seven years, vary the Verbe exactly after the forme aforesaid; I appeale to the testimony of Master *Roger Puttocke* Minister of Gods word, and Master *Badely* himselfe, who heard the Childe doe it in the presence of the Reverend Father in God *William* Lord Bishop of Kilmore. Diverse other Children, and some superannited, and despaired of, have attained the same ability within my time limited a quarter of a yeare. Whether I report truth, it may easily be examined. And I hope it may be beleived that Mr. *Scotts* child had attained the ability afore-mentioned, if it appeare that Mr. *Badelyes* child who is little more then nine yeares old, have attained (and not he alone, but some others) the same ability, within lesse time. I am almost afraid to relate it, lest it should not be beleived, but should beget more censures. Let him therefore that desireth to be best informed; come and satisfie his own eares, or let him bring me a subject to work upon, and he shall well see, that whatsoever I have affirmed, if my head lay at stake, shall by Gods assistance manure the spite of envy and detraction be performed, and should have beene proved upon any one, whom I undertooke within my time limited; that is, two yeares for reading, and

foure for the Latine, and upon acute ones in much lesse  
 time, might I be admitted to time and tryall: In perfor-  
 mance whereof my cheifest care hath been, is, and ever  
 shalbe, that by facility and encouragement I beget alacri-  
 ty and delight in all, but especially in the most wayward  
 and obtruse, that at no time they be daunted with pressure  
 and austerity. If I should give answer to every censure, I  
 should swell into a volume. I will therefore omit all but  
 one, and let my life and labours cleere me living, and my  
 papers, when I am dead, and that one is, it will not hold:  
 I believe verily that young children will not go on with  
 the same facility, unlesse memory and judgment were con-  
 firmed, which cannot be expected at nine or ten yeares of  
 age: or unlesse the same method might be prosecuted: yet  
 I say had Mr *Scots* child continued in the way but one  
 yeare more, he had benee fully confirmed. A comparison  
 may be drawn from a horse, his owner, and a rider to help  
 me with moderat men, no cavillers. The owner or master  
 committeth his horse (being a naturall trotter) to a cer-  
 tain rider, or an Artift, that can teach him to amble; he a-  
 grees at a price to have it done; the rider undertaketh, go-  
 eth on, bringeth the horse, so long as himselfe rideth him,  
 to a good stroke, the horse over-reacheth a good space; the  
 owner observeth it, and before the rider have settled and  
 confirmed the horse in his new pace, taketh the horse out  
 of his hands, whether out of avarice to save his money, or  
 curiosity and over-much hastines, being overjoyed with  
 his horses pace, it matters not; but he dismisseth his rider,  
 and rideth the horse himself, falsely supposing that then he  
 can hold the horse to his pace, as well as the rider: After a  
 while the horse, by reason that the master hath not the  
 same slight of hand for his carriage, is brought to a flutter-  
 ing and shuffling pace, and hath lost all good pace. Can the  
 rider be justly blamed? or shall he be condemned to be no  
 Artift? Such like is our case, untill the method be generally  
 knowne. For those, that be so overly and proud, of and in  
 their own wits and judgments, who will not believe, that  
 there



there can be such an invention for the improvement of Art, either because it came not, nor yet is come into their notion, or because it transcendeth their capacities, or because former ages had it not, nor will admit that any strange method can hold equivalency with theirs, as if no main conceit or invention could mount so high a pitch as theirs. I refer such men to the study of *Almanack*; out of which they may learn to be such good Chronologists, as to prescribe time to two of the rarest inventions, which the earth containeth: the one is the Art of *Printing*, the other, the terrible Engyne of the *Gun* and *Cannon*, and the violent devouring matter thereto belonging, the *Powder*, which neither the first, nor the second age of the world brought forth, nor the head of this, but even the very tail. For it is not two hundred years since the invention of the one, and not three since the invention of the other. Much might be said touching the severall methods, and the fruits and effects of them, as also touching the necessity and dignity of teachers and schoolemasters, if they be such as they ought to be. But lest in saying more of either, I might seem to arrogate that to my selfe, which will not be given or granted, I will only say of these, that they ought to be men endued with Art, method, and discretion: art, to understand what they teach; method and order, to teach it the right way, and to bring it to the capacity of children, with as much facility as may be; discretion to deale with children according to their constitutions and capacities. As concerning the methods, and the fruits and effects thereof, let the most intelligent caviller, give me answer to two questions. First, what is the way and ground of reading? Is it any other, then to know the true sound of every letter, how variously soever transposed in monosyllable or polysyllable, and to divide polysyllables rightly? and that skill being attained, is not the ground and way of reading? What can be done or required more, but dayly practise? Secondly, what is the first and cheife ground of Grammar? Is it not the true variation of the declinable



parts, whereof the Verb is the most perplexed? and that  
skill being attained, is not the cheife ground of gram-  
mar attained? can true connexion be made without true  
variation? What literate man knoweth not, that the Verb  
in all languages is the *basis* of all, and that all the other  
parts be but dependants on it, for that no full sentence or  
sence can be spoken or written without a Verbe expres-  
sed or understood. As I have said before, so I say againe, the  
true ground of either may be layd upon a competent sub-  
ject within a quarter of a yeare, and sometimes within  
lesse time: and then what workman may not finish the  
work? I therefore I conclude thus, *Dimidium facti, qui bene  
cepit, habet*. And so I commit my slender invention and  
practise, to the censure of the noble, generous and judici-  
ous, that they seeing the fruit thereof may commend it to  
posterity. Then howsoever my paines hath not gotten  
payment of some people, my conscience shall see consol-  
ation, and I shall confidently say at my dissolution, I have  
endeavoured to keep a cleere conscience, I have fought a  
good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith  
thenceforth is layde up for mee. &c.

FINIS.

UNIV.  
LIB.  
CAMB.



$AB^4$  2 right leaves.